



CITY OF HOUSTON

Sylvester Turner

Mayor

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February 27, 2019

The Honorable Dade Phelan
House Committee on State Affairs
P.O. Box 2910
Austin, Texas 78768

Dear Chairman Phalen and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony on House Bill 433 by Rep. Matt Shaheen regarding the reporting of lobbying by political subdivisions. The City of Houston already complies with the requirements of the bill, and offers this testimony on the measure.

The measure calls for two disclosures for political subdivisions: the total amount spent on lobbying and the names of each registered lobbyists. Currently, the Mayor's Office complies with this on two separate websites.

First, Mayor Sylvester Turner looked to make the federal and state lobby details easily accessible for those searching for them. On the Government Relations website for Houston, the "Lobbying Contracts" is featured as a link on the department's website. A brief summary of when City Council voted and approved each contract is listed along with a link to each contract itself.

For reference, the website is here: <https://www.houstontx.gov/govtrelations/lobbying-contracts.html>

Secondly, the Government Relations team produced a website detailing the 2017 Legislative Session. As part of that report on the City of Houston's Legislative Priorities, Major Legislative Battles, and Behavioral Health Advocacy, the site lists a link for "Acknowledgements" for "individuals who made these achievements possible."

The link goes on to show the full time members of the City's Government Relations Team, the City's combined Lobby Team, and the Legislative Liaisons working in various city departments.

For reference, the link to that page is as follows: <http://www.houstontx.gov/txlege/thanks>

In order for the general public to more easily see this information, Mayor Turner has linked them to our Government Relations site where they can be easily updated and found via search engines.

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Mayor Turner hopes that the level of transparency with regards to the City of Houston lobbying contracts fulfills the spirit of House Bill 433 and looks forward to working with Rep. Shaheen and members of the State Affairs Committee to find ways to better provide the public with needed information.

Thank you again for the opportunity to share our work.

Bill Kelly
Director of Government Relations
Mayor's Office, City of Houston